

REMARKS

This Application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action mailed April 14, 2005 (the "*Office Action*"). In the Office Action, the Examiner rejects Claims 1-5, 7-12, and 14-17; objects to Claims 6 and 13; and allows Claims 18-20. To hasten issuance of all claims, Applicant amends Claims 1, 2, 8, 9, 15, and 16 and cancels Claims 5, 6, 12 and 13. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and favorable action in this case.

Allowed Claims

Applicant notes with appreciation the allowance of Claims 18-20.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner objects to Claims 6 and 13 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, and the Examiner has indicated that Claims 6 and 13 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. To hasten issuance of currently allowable subject matter, Applicant amends Claim 1 to incorporate the limitations of Claims 5 and 6 and amends Claim 8 to include the limitations of Claims 12 and 13. Therefore, Claims 1 and 8 and their respective dependent claims are now in condition for allowance in accordance with the Examiner's indications.

Applicant also amends Claim 15 to incorporate limitations similar to those that the Examiner has indicated as allowable in Claim 6. Therefore, Claim 15 and its dependent claims should also be in condition for allowance. Thus based on the amendments, all claims are now in condition for allowance (subject to the discussion below with respect to the rejection of Claims 2, 9, and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph).

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112

The Examiner rejects Claims 2, 9, and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Applicant amends Claims 2, 9, and 16 to clarify the original intent of these claims. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner rejects Claims 1-3, 5, 8-10, 12, and 15-17 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,774,696 issued to Clark, et al. ("*Clark*"). As discussed above, Applicant amends all of the independent claims to include limitations that the Examiner indicated would place these claims in condition for allowance. These amendments obviate the rejection of the claims. While Applicant believes all independent claims as originally filed to be in condition for allowance in view of the cited art, Applicant amends these claims to hasten issuance of currently allowed subject matter. Applicant reserves the right to pursue the subject matter of the original claims in continuations or other applications without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner rejects Claims 4, 7, 11, and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Clark*. As discussed above, Applicant amends all of the independent claims to include limitations that the Examiner indicated would place these claims in condition for allowance. These amendments obviate the rejection of the claims. While Applicant believes all independent claims as originally filed to be in condition for allowance in view of the cited art, Applicant amends these claims to hasten issuance of currently allowed subject matter. Applicant reserves the right to pursue the subject matter of the original claims in continuations or other applications without prejudice or disclaimer.

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10

Conclusion

Applicant has made an earnest attempt to place the Application in condition for allowance. For the foregoing reasons, and for other reasons clearly apparent, Applicant respectfully requests full allowance of this Application. If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference or an interview would advance prosecution of the Application in any manner, the undersigned attorney for Applicant stands ready to conduct such a conference at the convenience of the Examiner.

Although no fees are believed to be currently due, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 02-0384 of BAKER BOTTS L.L.P.

Respectfully submitted,

BAKER BOTTS L.L.P.
Attorneys for Applicant



Kurt M. Pankratz
Reg. No. 46,977

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Customer Number:

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